

Names and address of Requesting Entity: Eclipse Energy Systems, 2537 Ham Blvd, Suite 1, Clearwater, FL 33764.

Description of Request: This earmark provides \$800,000 for the Optic Band Control Program (OBC) which focuses on advanced infrared filter technology for a wide range of Department of Defense interests. There is an urgent need for advancement of technology necessary for blocking certain wavelengths while allowing other wavelengths to pass through a filter. This is necessary for laser threat protection as well as more precise chemical and biological sensors and camera/reconnaissance systems. The funds will be used for equipment purchases, software modeling and design, machine operation and related engineering tasks.

NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL GENOMICS CENTER

Account: Medical Advanced Technology.

Names and address of Requesting Entity: Moffitt Cancer Center, 12902 Magnolia Drive, Tampa, FL 33612.

Description of Request: This earmark provides \$6,000,000 for the National Functional Genomics Center which conducts applied research for the Department of Defense for the discovery of molecular signatures for cancers and the accelerated development of new personalized drugs based on each individual's molecular fingerprint to treat cancer. This research directly translates into reduced financial costs and morbidity associated with cancer treatment in the military and results in reduced disruption to the active duty soldier.

Name of Requesting Member: Congressman GUS M. BILIRAKIS.

Bill Number: S. 3001.

Account: FEMA Predisaster Mitigation.

Legal Name/Address of Requesting Entity: Pinellas County, Florida, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida 33756.

Description: This funding will complete the infrastructure hardening of the existing Pinellas County facility housing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) equipment, supplies, and operations. The EMS facilities serve as a countywide base-of-operations during and post-disaster for more than 80 emergency personnel as well as the County's radio communications, Fire and EMS dispatch, 911 dispatch, Fire and EMS administration, and EMS response.

Funding will support roof analysis and installation of new roof systems, installation of fastening/bracing equipment, strengthening sections of walls with additional structural steel, and upgrading of the generator and mechanical systems to assure continuance of emergency activities during storms and other emergency events.

I believe that the use of these federal funds are justified because this project advances the goals of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 100-107) for implementation of pre-disaster mitigation measures in states and localities that are cost effective and designed to reduce injuries and loss of life.

The project also advances the goals of FEMA's Predisaster Mitigation Fund, which finances projects for infrastructure improvements, analysis, and other activities for disaster mitigation.

Spending Plan: These federal funds will support exceptional one-time construction costs. Pinellas County will provide fifty percent (\$1,000,000) of total project cost (\$2,000,000).

Pinellas County provides ongoing service and operational costs.

SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY IN BANGLADESH

SPEECH OF

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, thank you to Representative CROWLEY for his excellent work on this resolution.

I rise today in support of this important resolution and in support of free and fair elections.

Bangladesh, the world's third most populated Muslim country, must return to the fold of democracy and uphold the most basic human rights—the right to vote. Over the past two years, the people of Bangladesh have lived under a state of emergency. As the resolution outlines, the rights of the press have been curtailed and corruption is running rampant.

We all know that a nation can only succeed when it heeds the will of the people. Security—both economic and political—cannot be established while citizens are being ignored and repressed.

Bangladesh must hold free, fair, credible, peaceful, and transparent elections. I urge support of House Resolution 1402.

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 2008

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5244, the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights Act. This legislation is timely and necessary, and importantly, it should alleviate the economic woes that consumers are experiencing during these tough economic times. The purpose of this bill is to provide crucial protections against unfair, but unfortunately common, credit card practices.

While the Federal Reserve will likely issue regulations on this same topic, it is important that we as legislators do not abdicate our responsibility to the Administration. As members of Congress, we must do all that we can to ensure that the credit interests of the American people are well taken care of. Any regulation passed by the Federal Reserve will likely be the subject of judicial challenge. Thus, legislation will be needed.

H.R. 5244, ends unfair, arbitrary interest rate increases by preventing card companies from unfairly increasing interest rates on existing card balances. The bill makes clear that retroactive increases are permitted only if a cardholder is more than 30 days late, if a pre-agreed promotional rate expires, or if the rate adjusts as part of a variable rate. Under this bill, a credit card company has to give 45 days notice of all interest rate increases so consumers can pay off their balances and shop for a better deal elsewhere.

This bill is the first of its kind to stop excessive "over-the-limit" fees and it ends unfair

penalties for cardholders who pay their balances in full on time. H.R. 5244 also protects cardholders from due date gimmicks and prevents companies from using misleading terms and damaging consumers' credit ratings. Perhaps, most important is that the bill protects vulnerable consumers from high-fee subprime credit cards and it bars issuing credit cards to minors. This bill should help Americans and will require credit companies to employ fair credit card practices.

I recognize that the credit card industry and other members of the financial services community may oppose this bill. They argue that the limits this legislation would place on the competitive market come with unintended consequences, such as higher costs for consumers and reduced access to credit. The legislation would also result in the elimination of policies that benefit consumers, and disregards efforts by Federal regulators to complete and promulgate new credit card regulations.

Opponents of H.R. 5244 claim that the bill includes a number of prescriptive mandates that will increase costs and/or limit options that consumers have today. For example, the cost associated with requirements that dictate how a customer's payment can be attributed to their outstanding balance will likely result in the end of promotional rate offers. Importantly, these opponents do not indicate that the consumers will be provided with more disclosure and fair and accurate information on rates that will not likely be changed by the credit card companies.

It is immaterial that the Federal Reserve will be issuing regulations that govern credit card practices. It is the purview of this Congress to legislate and it is by legislative authority that agencies promulgate regulations. I do not find the arguments in opposition to this bill to be persuasive.

The credit card market is highly competitive. Although we are experiencing tough economic times and the credit card companies are feeling economic pressure, so too, are the American consumers. The consumers are merely working-class people. If the credit card companies think they are squeezed, imagine the plight of the American people. Something must be done.

H.R. 5244 is balanced and is a step in the right direction. I support the bill and I look forward to working with the credit card industry and the consumers on this very important issue.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 2008

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5244, Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights Act of 2008.

With wages stagnating and turmoil afflicting our entire financial industry, this bill will help the many Americans who are falling deeper into debt. Over the last several years the average American household's credit card debt has risen dramatically, from \$2,966 in 1990 to